

150. *The Christian's Consolation and Hope*
considered: 156

IN A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the

D E A T H

Of the REVEREND

Mr. *JOHN TREACHER,*

Late MINISTER of the Gospel in
Duke-street, in the Park, Southwark;

Who departed this Life, *April 12, 1756.*

In the 76th Year of his Age.

Preached at the above Place *April the 25th.*

By *SAMUEL FRY.*

Published at the Request of the Relations.

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The Christian's Confidence and Hope
expressed:

IN A
SERMON

DELIVERED
BY
MR. JOHANNES


late MINISTER of the Gospel in
Dordrecht, in the Year, 1756.
Who departed this Life, Nov. 1756.

In the Fifth Year of the Age,
preached at the above Place, April the sixth.

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LONDON:
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2 THESS. ii. 16.

*Which hath loved us, and given us
everlasting Consolation and good
Hope through Grace.*

AMIDST the many resources that men seek in a time of danger and distress for relief and satisfaction, it is certain there is none so safe, as that wherein a truly christian and gracious soul places his trust; even in him that hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.

There are too many in the world, who though they will not declare in words, yet by their actions manifest they have chosen this world for their home, and regard it as if it were of everlasting duration; hence the language of their souls is, *who will shew us any good.* Notwithstanding constant experience, as well as the scripture of truth assure us, that *here*

we have no continuing city, Heb. xiii. 14. that we are every moment liable to the stroke of death, it being appointed for all men once to die, Heb. ix. 27. and that they are the only happy persons in this world, and will be so in the future, who have their Lives hid with Christ in God, who amidst the troubles and vicissitudes of this life can view heaven as their home and inheritance, and thence derive everlasting consolation, rejoicing in hope thro' grace.

This, my friends, is the privilege of true christians, and what our aged and beloved brother happily experienced, whose late decease occasions my present discourse to you from this subject; on which, while you attend, I wish a greater capacity to display what God has done, what he still does, and will bestow on those that love him, as expressed or implied in those words, who hath loved them and given them everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.

The apostle St. *Paul* being hindered from coming to the *Thessalonians* according to his desire, sends this epistle to supply the want of his presence, and to
incourage

incourage and bear them up under their many and great afflictions; and this he does by the argument of Christ's second coming, and from the certainty and impartiality of the future judgment, and that just retribution which will be render'd to every one according to that awful sentence; but though the coming of Christ is certain, and to many will be sudden, yet there were, and perhaps still are many predictions to be fulfilled, and many events in the divine council to be accomplish'd ere that day of the Lord come; and in this chapter we have an account of some of them, viz. A general apostacy, or falling away from the faith; a revelation of the man of sin, together with his final ruin and destruction; after which christians are reminded of their interest in the divine favour, and exhorted to be stedfast and persevere in their christian course to the end: in the verse whereof our text is a part, and the following one is this apostle's prayer for the christians; *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every*

every good word and work. A very short but most affectionate and comprehensive prayer. The objects of this address are, our Lord Jesus Christ, and God, even our Father. Jesus Christ seems to be first named, to remind us that he is the only acceptable way to the Father, and to teach us to commit our souls and eternal concerns unto the great and ever-blessed God, with stedfast faith and unshaken trust and confidence in his mercy, as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him our Father; to whom, as children by adoption, we may apply at all times and on all occasions, and find a ready and all-sufficient supply.

The apostle grounds this encouragement on the consideration of what God had already done for him and them; *him that hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace*; whereby incouragement was given to pray, and to hope that God, who had begun a good work in them, would perfect it until the day of Christ.

Having thus led you to the words of the text, in my farther enlargement on them, I shall

I. Consider the nature and properties of these blessings, which the apostle styles everlasting consolation and good hope.

II. Describe the character of those whose portion and happiness this is.

III. Discourse of the efficient cause whereby it is obtained and continued, viz. The love of God through grace, &c.

I. Of the nature and properties of these blessings, which the apostle calls everlasting consolation and good hope. This peculiar character given of the christian's consolation, implies that it is spiritual and sublime; neither derived from nor dependant on any external circumstances, which are continually varying and fluctuating; present worldly enjoyments are at best unsatisfactory, they weaken and decay, and even perish with the using; whereas the comforts of a good christian, arising from the consciousness of his own integrity, and of the divine approbation, are substantial and durable, even though external comforts fail, and the body itself languish

languish and decay, these consolations don't leave and forsake, but comfort and support him under the severest trials : nay, these trials have many times an apparent tendency to the growth and improvement of those graces, on which the comforts of religion and good hope thro' grace do so much depend, that as the Apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. iv. 16. *While the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day* ; though the body is of a mortal and decaying nature, frequently impaired by sickness, the soul may notwithstanding be healthy, lively, and vigorous ; and the afflictions of the body very often prepare the mind to seek after and taste with greater sweetness of the cup of consolation. This the Apostle witnesseth as his own, and the experience of other christians, 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble.* For as a good Christian has comforts, which he may wisely adapt to his own various and particular circumstances, so he is best qualified,

qualified, and it becomes his duty to administer to the comfort of others according to their tribulation, and to help others with the same comforts, with which they themselves are comforted of God, *for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation aboundeth by Christ.* The Apostle *Peter* in like manner shews, that a Christian may have real joy under great affliction, as knowing *it is if need be, they are in heaviness,* 1 Peter i. 6. And that, *the trial of their faith worketh experience; experience, patience; and patience hope.*

Beside these general observations, I apprehend this everlasting consolation may be considered as including in it.

1. The Promise and oath of God, respecting everlasting Good.
2. The undertakings of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the alone Mediator between God and man.
3. The influence and operation of the divine Spirit in fitting and preparing the Soul for everlasting Good, and giving an earnest of it; and,

4. The heavenly inheritance which the Christian views as his future portion, and present encouragement.

1. Of the promise of God, respecting everlasting Good, 2 Pet. i. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises*: Such as the pardon of sin; the enlightening, enlivening, sanctifying, and consoling influences of the Holy Ghost; *that by these we may be made partakers of the divine nature*, and rendered meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light, of which inheritance, even eternal life, we have the plainest and fullest promise; 1 John ii. 25. *This is the promise he hath promised us, even eternal life*. Suitable to his infinite perfections of power, wisdom, and goodness; and to confirm our faith in these promises, he hath condescended to express himself after the manner of men, when they would convey an idea of their absolute veracity; Heb. vi. 16, 17, 18. *For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath of confirmation is to them an end of all strife; wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of his promise, the immutability of his*

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his council, confirm'd it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us; hereby removing all doubt and mistrust, and encouraging the soul with a religious trust and confidence, patiently to wait for it.

2dly, The undertakings of our Lord Jesus Christ, is another ground and reason of this consolation, as he is the *alone mediator between God and man*, Luke ii. 25. The blessed Jesus is characterised as the *consolation of Israel*, and with great propriety, since to sinful men *there is no other name given under heaven whereby they can be saved but through Jesus*, Acts iv. 12. The sinner, whilst under a sense of guilt and divine displeasure, can enjoy no real comfort; and the awakened sinner, if rightly instructed, will endeavour to become reconciled to God through Christ, by repentance and amendment, and by reliance on what Jesus Christ has done and suffered for us, *for he is our peace, and we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

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Christ, Rom. v. 1, 2. The beginning of the Prodigal's joy was the reconciliation of his father, *Luke xv. to the latter end*. The scriptures represent the sinners reconciliation to God, as a fruit and effect of Christ's laying down his life, and shedding his most precious blood; and as derived to us from the attonement he made *thro' the body of his flesh*, when expiring on the cross, Col. i. 21, 22. We know of no pacification between heaven and earth, God and man, if Jesus had not interposed as our Mediator; he was contented *to bear our griefs, and carry our sorrows, when the chastisement of our peace was upon him, that by his stripes we might be healed*, Isa. liii. 4, 5. Hence the pardon of sin was early declared to be preached in his name, and this is a proper ground of comfort and everlasting consolation, according to the Prophet Isa. xl. 1, 2. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord; Tell them their iniquity is forgiven, their sin is pardoned*; and when our Saviour would convey the strongest idea of Happiness, or consolation, to the Paralytic, he says to him; *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*, Mat. ix. 2. Now
this

this good we can only enjoy through Christ, *in whom we have redemption thro' his Blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. And it is in this way only, we can hope to be partakers of the promises of the everlasting covenant; *for all the promises of God are Yea, and Amen, in Christ Jesus*, 2 Cor. i. 20. They are in him as the meritorious cause; the covenant of grace is nothing less than the many rich and precious promises of the gospel, ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ; and through him and from him we receive all degrees of consolation, as from a treasury; *for of his fulness, saith St. John, have we received, and grace for grace*; and it is derived to us, as from the head, and suited to the circumstances and exigencies of all the members.

3dly, In this everlasting consolation is included the influence of the blessed Spirit, in fitting and preparing the soul for everlasting good, and giving an earnest of it, *the Holy Ghost is called the Comforter*, John xiv. 26. and it is ever represented as the Spirit's office to administer consolation
to

the hearts of God's people, and thence spiritual comfort is called *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, Rom. iv. 17. because the Holy Ghost begets and maintains it in the soul. Thus our Lord in his discourse with the Woman of Samaria, John iv. 10. says, *if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water*; and ver. 14. *Whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him, shall never thirst, but it shall be in him as a well of Water, springing up into eternal life*; this spake he of the Spirit, which they who believed in him, should receive, John vii. 39. Every christian hath more or less of this Spirit taking up its abode in the heart, influencing the temper of his mind, and the course of his life: *Ye are not*, says the Apostle, *in the flesh, but in the spirit*; *if so be the spirit of God dwell in you, and if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin*; *but the spirit is life, because of righteousness*; *for if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9, 10. And ver. 14. *For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God*. This Spirit I
have

have said, prepares the soul for the reception of the good promised, and gives the soul an earnest of it; hence the Apostle argues, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. or rather infers from the Christians hope of future happiness, *We know that he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit,* ver. 5. Sanctifying our natures, bringing us into a nearer imitation of the divine perfections, and *witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,* Rom. viii. 17. This then is part of the consolation of a good Christian, which does not terminate here, but as observed,

4thly, Reaches to heaven itself, the happiness of which state none can conceive, much less describe; St. Peter, 1st Ep. i. 4. gives us a brief, but comprehensive account of it; calls it *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven*; incorruptible, as oppos'd to decay and change; undefiled, that is, pure, without mixture, and eternal; *for corruption must put on incorruption, and mortal*

mortal must put on immortality; the frail and perishing body be freed from its present imperfection, and made the meet receptacle of the soul, which will then be pure, holy and free from the least tincture of sin; for as neither sin nor sorrow shall have any place there, there will be no alloy or mixture in their happiness; neither will the duration of it lessen the transporting sensation; but all the faculties of the soul be continually and delightfully employed, and advancing to perfection and happiness in the presence and favour of God without end. It is said to be in heaven, to denote that it is glorious; for all that is in heaven is glorious, and thence called *the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints*, Eph. i. 18. and it is represented as the Christian's reversion, *reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the mighty power of God, thro' faith unto salvation*; which expressions imply the certainty of their possessing and enjoying it, as prepared and reserved for them; this affords consolation to the righteous, even in the distant prospect and view of it, and is justly denominated everlasting consolation.

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It follows next, to take notice of this phraife good hope : As to the nature and properties of this hope, I apprehend it does not barely consist in a natural affection, but that the hope of a christian is more substantial and influencing ; that it is indeed a grace of the divine Spirit, and shews itself in a patient waiting for, and expectation of the fulfilling of the promises of God, respecting their future Good. And as it is not barely an affection of the mind, neither is it Faith ; *for Faith is the substance of things hoped for*, Heb. xi. 1. Faith realises absent good, and brings it nearer to our view, and raises our trust in the divine promises, as though it were already accomplished ; but hope waits for the fulfilling of the promises in all the parts and utmost extent of them. Again, hope differs from desire, desire often consists in the longing of the soul after some good, which it may not be probable nor possible to obtain ; whereas hope is an expectation of the soul of some good, apprehended at least to be possible, though encompassed with many difficulties ; but

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the Christian's hope has in view some good, not only possible and probable, but (as founded on the promises of God himself) certain and indubitable; and may therefore, amongst many other reasons which might be mentioned, justly be stiled good hope.

Thus have I exhibited some ideas comprised in the expressions of everlasting consolation and good hope, which may be farther enlarged on from the object of it, and confirmed by the Experience of Christians. But I shall proceed,

2dly, To the character of those whose portion and happiness this is. The Apostle spoke it of himself, and other good Christians, as if we that are true believers in the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; not barely as assenting to the report the gospel gives, which many do without its having a proper influence on them; for these can never receive any saving benefit; but by true believers, I mean such as have by the power of the word, as a means in the hand of the blessed Spirit, been brought to see the evil

evil of sin and the destructive consequences of it : those who see their lost and miserable state, and from thence have been led to enquire what they must do to be saved ; who have seen their want, and in some measure the worth of Christ, and observing the calls and encouragements given in the gospel to such souls, have heartily received the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, in all the parts and branches of his great undertakings for poor sinners : one, whose faith works by love to God, to the dear Redeemer, and to all who bare the stamp of the divine image : one that heartily renounces whatever he apprehends to be contrary to the will of God, and cordially affects, and to the utmost of his power performs all that he commands ; pays a sincere and unreserv'd obedience to the commands, and example of the Son of God, who has given the clearest and fullest declaration of the mind of God, and submits to his government, as both Lord and King ; after all which, he looks to him as the High Priest, as well as the Apostle of his Christian profession, and depends on the vir-

tue and efficacy of his most precious blood, as an atonement for sin ; and upon his prevailing intercession, who after he had *suffer'd, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of his Father and our Father, as our kind and constant advocate ; in all these respects Christ is precious to the Believer ; and therefore such soul follows him by faith to the upper regions, and in the use of appointed means, holds communion and fellowship with him as his Lord and head ; his head of influence as well as government ; to whom he often in the most solemn manner, commits the care of his eternal All, and is well satisfied, that what is safely lodg'd in the hands of Jesus, shall never be lost. He therefore lives in the patient waiting for his second coming, looking for the completion of his hopes, at the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; and he is animated by this great and glorious hope, not only to purify himself, but as far as in him lies, to advance

vance the knowledge and practice of religion amongst men, that he may thereby bring glory to God, and promote the happiness of his own soul, and the souls of others; especially *praying in the Holy Ghost, that he may be kept in the love of God, while he is looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, Jude 20.* This is a believer indeed, whose faith unites him to God and his blessed Saviour, in which he lives and in which he desires to die. And from hence arises a principal ground of his everlasting consolation and good hope, and in all his views of that immortal state to which he is hastening; he depends on Christ, *as the Resurrection and the Life*; knowing that he that *raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken his mortal body by the same Spirit* by which he lives and dies united to the Lord Jesus. Thus argues the Apostle, *Rom. viii. 10, 11. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness; but if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body*
by

by his spirit that dwelleth in you. We all know we have mortal dying bodies; are under the sentence of death, and constantly tending to dissolution; that in the midst of life, in the seeming most vigorous state of health, liable to be surprised by the awful messenger of death; and this as the effect of sin, for *by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin*, Rom. v. 12. Yet for this body there is a life at last; of this we are assured, both from the resurrection of Christ, and the in-dwelling of his Spirit in all the saints. Jesus rose as the head and fore-runner of all true believers in him, 1 Cor. xv. 20. And as the same Spirit which raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, dwells in the souls of all true believers; hence the bodies of the Saints are stiled the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Corinth. iii. 16, and vi. 19. And though their temples may be suffer'd to lie and moulder in the dust, yet they shall be raised again, whatever difficulties may lie in the way. For the tabernacle of *David* shall be rebuilt, and the Spirit breathing on dead bones shall cause them to live, and the
Saints

Saints *even in their flesh shall see God*; here their good hopes terminate in fruition, which leads me to the

3d. Observation propos'd; and that was the efficient cause whereby this happiness is obtained and continued, *viz.* the love of God thro' grace, &c. The love of God was the first moving cause; *for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John iii. 16.

And the Apostle argues, *Rom. viii. 32. That God who spared not his own Son, but gave him, or delivered him up for us all, shall he not with him freely give us all things.* This is the product of divine love, to give his one, his only begotten Son for the salvation of poor sinners, hereby encouraging our hopes for whatever we need, grace here and glory hereafter: *Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*, John iv. 9, 10. *Herein was the love of God manifested to us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him*; and this love of God must
probably

probably appear the more astonishing, when we consider that God bestowed this blessing on us, while he passed by the Angels that had fallen; for according to the appointment and grace of God to sinful men, *Christ took not on him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham, made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people*, Heb. ii. 16, 17. and ch. iv. 13. This was his own free grace and mercy, favour not only undeserved but unsought for, and even when our happiness could not add to his essential glory and felicity; and to this I may add, that it was included in the scheme of redemption, the effect of his free inherent goodness, even before we existed; and even though now in some measure made known to us, is still incomprehensible and past finding out; called *the Peace of God which passeth all understanding*, Phil. iv. 7. The comfortable consoling sense of our reconciliation to God, and an interest in his favour, and the good hopes of enjoying the heavenly

heavenly inheritance is a greater good ; affords greater consolation than can be sufficiently conceived or expressed. These things are therefore represented as what the Angels desire to look into, as the matter of their just admiration ; and to men, the proper subject of their praises to all eternity, agreeable to the language of Saint Peter ; *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us unto a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* In like manner, St. Paul to Titus, Chap. iii. 4—7. *but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs of the hope of eternal life.*

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Thus

Thus I have gone through the several heads proposed, and now proceed to the use and application thereof.

1st. Then we learn, that Christians have supports under the many troubles and afflictions of life; and also in the views of death peculiar to themselves; they have bread to feed upon which the world knows nothing of; Comforts of a sublime and spiritual nature, that strangers to religion cannot intermeddle with; tho' they are sometimes cast down, yet they have no room for despair; for tho' outward comforts fail, and friends forsake them, they experience a serenity and composure of mind, which the world cannot give, neither take away; an everlasting consolation and good hope, even when outward circumstances are adverse and afflictive: they can say in the elegant language of the Prophet, *Though the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold,*
and

and there be no herd in the stall; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation; Heb. iii. 17, 18. and with David, The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. Nor will this consolation fail them in their last moments; they can look beyond death with comfort, and feel its near approach without fear and horror; as holy *David* triumph'd, *Yea, though I walk through the Valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me, Psalm xxiii. 4.* Not so the impious and profane, the hypocrite and false professor; they are driven away in their wickedness, while the righteous have hope in their death.

2dly. What has been said, may also remind us of the excellency of Christianity, and recommend it to every impartial enquirer after truth and happiness; herein is life and immortality brought to light, religion recommended as having the promise of the life that now is,

and of that which is to come, solid peace and satisfaction in this world, and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the next, till the opposers of christianity shew us a more rational, profitable, and encouraging road to walk in; let us sincerely embrace and faithfully adhere to this. And is there any who are seriously inquiring what they must do to be saved? the answer is, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts xvi. 31. i. e. Come unto him, receive him, give thyself up to him, obey his commands, follow his example, the closer the better, and thou shalt be saved by him. *John* i. 12.

3dly. This should teach us to moderate our grief and trouble under all the disappointments of life, and in our reflections on, and apprehensions of death; and so much the more concerning such who are fallen asleep in the Lord, who have ceased from their labour, and whose works follow them.

A fresh

A fresh instance of mortality has brought us together at this time, which I hope by divine blessing, may be wisely improved by us, viz. The death of our late worthy friend and brother Mr. *John Treacher*.

He was born at *Chesham* in *Bucks*, in 1680; his father was a strict observer of the form of worship in the established Church; his Mother, a worthy member of the Baptist Congregation in that place; they had several children, and, as it too often happens, the children embraced different sentiments; but what might otherwise have been a disadvantage, was wisely improv'd by our deceased friend, as it led him to an early and impartial enquiry after truth, which terminated in his embracing the truth in the love of it; and as it pleased God to dispose his mind in some measure to a suitable preparation, he at about the age of twenty years, made a chearful and public profession of the christian religion, and on that profession was baptis'd

tis'd by Mr. *John Russel*, then pastor of that people; he had not long been planted in the house of the Lord, but his profiting appeared to many. And his constant delight in, and attendance on public worship, prayer, and religious conferences, joined with his natural good genius, contributed to his great improvement, and was so conspicuous, that he was early invited to be more publicly useful; and at twenty-two years of age was prevailed on to preach before a congregation of Ministers and Brethren, so highly satisfactory, that he was soon after chosen by the Church to assist in the ministry of the gospel; and this he did with considerable success, many acknowledging him the instrument of their conviction and conversion, and others of their encouragement and comfort in religion; and it was always his care to be an ornament to the religion he professed, and to inculcate it by an inoffensive and exemplary conduct. The more conspicuous virtues of his life, were his unaffected humility and patience under the difficulties

difficulties and afflictions of life, demeaning himself with chearfulness and resignation. His quiet peaceable forbearing disposition shone in a most resplendent light throughout his whole conduct; which as it in some measure qualified him for it, so it occasioned his being often called to the good office of arbitration, both in the church and amongst his other friends and acquaintance; in which, however difficult task, he was generally successful. And as he was of a meek and quiet spirit, so he enjoyed quietness, composure and serenity of mind, even to his last moments.

As a minister of the Gospel, he flourished therein, bringing forth acceptable fruit to a good old age, and when confined to his bed near four months, and oftentimes attended with the most acute pains.

His discourse of his supports and comforts was very entertaining to those about him; he was blessed with an humble, but firm and unshaken persuasion of the divine approbation, through the
mercy

mercy of God, and the mediation of Jesus Christ, often using the words of the text, that he had good hope through Grace ; his affectionate regard for his children and their offspring, led him frequently to put up ejaculatory petitions for them, particularly that they might highly prize the means of grace, and suitably improve them. He was frequently delirious towards the close of his life ; in these intervals, the more pleasing and transporting views presented to his imagination, without a mixture of melancholy and dreadful apprehension ; he met the final stroke, and took an everlasting farewell of this transitory state, a state of continual disappointments and causes of pain and trouble, he rests from his labour, and is fallen asleep in Jesus.

Let me now address myself to you, who are the children and relatives of the deceased, and intreat you to improve this Providence ; you are hereby called to consider your latter end ; let his example, let his advice and his prayer suitably

suitably affect and influence you ; especially take care that his dying advice to improve the means of grace, given in the most affecting manner, be not lost on any of you, and labour to imitate him, wherein he was an imitator of Jesus Christ, and endeavour so to live as you shall wish to have done when you come to dye. And, you my dear brother in the service of the Sanctuary of God, I am persuaded will be careful to improve the present Providence, by persevering in the work and service of our divine Master, to which you have been called, and wherein you have hitherto laboured to the pleasure and improvement of many ; that you may finish your course with joy, and the ministry which you have received of the Lord Jesus, testifying the gospel of the grace of God. And you my Friends of this Congregation, who by this stroke of death have lost a brother in Christ, one who watched over you in the Lord, and admonish'd you : Let me exhort you to pray to the Lord of the harvest, that this

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loss

loss may be repaired by another suitably qualify'd to go in and out before, and break the bread of life to you, that you may never be left as sheep without a shepherd.

4thly, This should also be improved by us all, by engaging us to an impartial examination into the state of our own souls, what we know by experience of the work of divine Grace, whether we have received the Lord Jesus Christ, have made a publick and solemn profession of our faith in him, and have endeavour'd to walk suitable to our holy profession ; and whether our advances in religion have been answerable to the advantages we have enjoyed, such as may evidence our interest in this everlasting consolation, and confirm our good hope through Grace.

Finally, let the present providence and discourse, quicken us all to a wise and religious improvement of our time, in the use of all the means of grace afforded us,

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especially

especially of prayer, that the grace of God may be kept alive in our hearts, and be the governing principle of our whole life; may we never forget the importance of religion to our future acceptance, nor flatter ourselves with the vain hopes of long life, and put off the necessary preparation for death, when perhaps this night our souls may be required of us; and let us remember, that this will be our best support in the hour of death, and give us everlasting consolation; *when our flesh and our heart shall fail*, we shall then be able on the best foundation to say, *God is the strength of our heart and our portion for ever.*

F I N I S.

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